



American Chronic Pain Association

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Campaign Begins to Help Idahoans Manage Chronic Pain Idaho First Lady Lori Otter Joins American Chronic Pain Association to Launch Education Campaign to Help Idahoans Manage Their Pain

Idaho First Lady Lori Otter joined the American Chronic Pain Association and other organizations to raise awareness about conditions like fibromyalgia that cause chronic pain for tens of thousands of people in Idaho. The campaign will include public service announcements featuring the First Lady.

“Fibromyalgia and other chronic pain conditions strike thousands across Idaho, and women are disproportionately at risk,” Mrs. Otter said. “For years there was little help. Today, however, I’m glad to join the ACPA in making sure people know they can live a full life in spite of pain.”

Fibromyalgia is the most common chronic, widespread pain condition in the U.S. affecting more than 6 million Americans. Women are much more likely to report suffering from fibromyalgia than men (between 80-90 percent of people diagnosed with fibromyalgia are women), although the condition affects both sexes.

The outlook for people with fibromyalgia, however, has never been better. Recent advances in drug therapy may help to offer relief from symptoms. The value of exercise, diet, and rest are also being recognized as ways to help manage this condition.

“Since its inception, the American Chronic Pain Association (ACPA) goal has been to provide peer support and education to those in pain,” said Penney Cowan founder and Executive Director of ACPA. “Today we help people take an active role in their healthcare and provide coping skills so that they can better manage their pain and live more fully in spite of their pain. However, there are still too many who don’t know that there is help available and we appreciate the support of the First Lady spreading the word of hope.”

“Here in Boise we work with dozens of people who deal every day with the everyday challenges presented by fibromyalgia,” said Mary Seroski of the Boise Fibromyalgia Support Group. “Fibromyalgia can be hard to diagnose and some don’t get correctly diagnosed. We join with the First Lady in telling people that there is hope and there is help.”

Also joining the effort are the Idaho/Utah Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation and the Western Pain Society.

Local pain management doctor Richard Radnovich added his voice to the effort noting the increased number of treatments available for those suffering with pain.

“There has been a dramatic improvement in the quality of care we can provide our patients who suffer from chronic pain,” said Boise doctor Dr. Richard Radnovich. “Unfortunately insurance doesn’t always cover the best treatments for fibromyalgia and other diseases, but patients do have more choices than ever and should ask their doctor about the help that is available.”

Public service announcements will be distributed to all Idaho TV and radio stations during the first week of December.

Mrs. Otter is on the Foundation Board at St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center, the Treasure Valley Reading Foundation, Idaho Governor's Cup, and is the Summer Reading Ambassador for the Idaho Association of Libraries. With her husband Governor Otter, she is on the Idaho Meth Project Advisory Council and has worked to promote and launch the Idaho Meth Project, a prevention campaign designed to reduce the first time use of Methamphetamines by youth in Idaho. First Lady Lori Otter has completed three marathons and remains committed to health and physical fitness. For more information about First Lady Lori Otter, visit <http://firstlady.idaho.gov>.

The American Chronic Pain Association was founded in 1980 by Penney Cowan in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After many years of living with chronic pain, Penney had taken part in the pain management program at the Cleveland Clinic and was eager to maintain the skills she had learned there when she returned to her daily life. Today several hundred ACPA support groups meet across the US and in Canada, Great Britain, and many other countries. The ACPA's unique materials are a primary resource for individuals seeking to improve the quality of their lives and for the professionals who help them. For more information about the American Chronic Pain Association, visit www.theacpa.org.

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